

INTRODUCTION

The most common time signatures in western music are 2/2, 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 5/4, 7/4, 3/8, 6/8, 9/8 and 12/8 time. And there are still others you should have no difficulty understanding as long as the denominator is divisible by 2 such as 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, etc. But there are some strange and unusual time signatures referred to as “irrational” time signatures that you've probably never seen or heard - they could pop up in avant garde rock, jazz, and especially classical music.

In this book I've originated some strange and unusual time signatures in quarter and eighth time that are theoretically possible, and potentially could arise even though it's highly unlikely you would find yourself having to play them. Still, the potential is there, especially as classical composers, jazz and rock players, as well as song and rap writers continually try to explore new and original ideas in music.

In this study there are two main sections - Section One describes theoretical time signatures in quarter time; Section Two describes theoretical time signatures in eighth time.

All the exercises are mostly written as rock beats which, in many cases, are the same beats used by jazz drummers when commonly playing a fusion of rock and jazz or latin and jazz. Once you understand how to count and play the beats within the rock idiom you should find it easier to adjust in order to play the necessary beats for whatever genre of music you happen to be performing.

In a real sense playing through this book represents an expedition into uncharted and unexplored musical territory. When you turn this page you'll be entering a land of imaginary time signatures and beats that do not as yet exist - but one day might.

I suggest you use all the exercises simply as ideas for constructing your own strange and unusual time signatures in which you develop basic beats for latin, rock, or jazz

FIRST EDITION

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SECTION ONE

BASIC BEATS

IN STRANGE & UNUSUAL

TIME SIGNATURES

IN "QUARTER" TIME

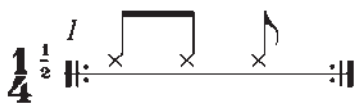
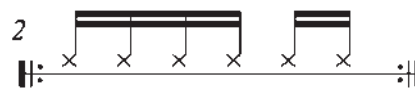
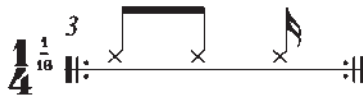
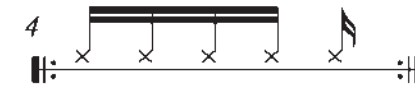
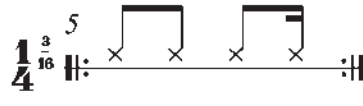
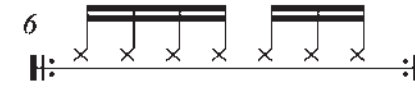
In this first section you'll be presented with basic beats in the following strange and unusual time signatures:

$\frac{4}{4}^{\frac{1}{2}}$ time, $\frac{4}{4}^{\frac{1}{16}}$ time, and $\frac{4}{4}^{\frac{3}{16}}$ time;

$\frac{3}{4}^{\frac{1}{2}}$ time, $\frac{3}{4}^{\frac{1}{16}}$ time, and $\frac{3}{4}^{\frac{3}{16}}$ time;

$\frac{5}{4}^{\frac{1}{2}}$ time, $\frac{5}{4}^{\frac{1}{16}}$ time, and $\frac{5}{4}^{\frac{3}{16}}$ time.

PREPARATORY EXERCISES

Count: 1 e + d 1 e	1 e + d 1 e
$\frac{1}{4}^{\frac{1}{2}}$ <i>I</i> 	2 
Count: 1 e + d 1	1 e + d 1
$\frac{1}{4}^{\frac{1}{16}}$ <i>3</i> 	4 
Count: 1 e + d 1 e +	1 e + d 1 e +
$\frac{1}{4}^{\frac{3}{16}}$ <i>5</i> 	6 

Playing and counting the above exercises smoothly will help you play the exercises on the following pages. First count out loud, then stop counting as you play.

The first strange and unusual time signature in this section is four & a half quarter time. The following shows a basic eighth note rock cymbal beat in that time signature:

Ex.1 $4\frac{1}{2}$ / 4 Count: 1 - 2 + 3 + 4 - 1

Cym.
Snare

At first glance you could say, “Wait a minute - there are nine eighth notes all together, so why not call it 9/8 time?”. The answer is simple - all time signatures tend to have an individual character, and they’re phrased in a certain way. The following example shows how a bar of 9/8 is typically written and phrased:

Ex.2 $9/8$ Count: 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3

Cym.

Notice the rhythm in 9/8 is usually three groups of threes with a triplet feel, and counted 123,123,123. That is very different from the phrasing and the feel of the 9 eighth notes in $4\frac{1}{2}$ / 4 time seen in Example 1.

A basic sixteenth note rock cymbal beat will also be shown as follows:

Ex.3 $4\frac{1}{2}$ / 4 Count: 1 e - d 2 e + d 3 e - d 4 e + d 1 e

Cym.
Snare

Variations of a linear rock beat between the cymbal and snare will be included as well. All exercises are presented with one or two staff lines subject to whether or not a bass part is included. When there is a bass and snare part they’re connected together. When a bass part is not presented the snare part is either notated on its own or connected to the cymbal part depending on how I felt it would be clearest to read. If no bass is presented include it in any way you feel is appropriate. In fact, add or omit notes throughout as you see fit - in other words, make all the exercises your own.

One final point - in order to make everything as musical as possible try to hum or sing some riff with a rock feel as you play each exercise.

BASIC EIGHTH NOTE CYMBAL BEAT IN $\frac{4}{4}$ TIME WITH SNARE PATTERNS BUT WITHOUT BASS

Include your bass in any way you feel is appropriate.

Count: 1 + 2 + d 3 - 4 - d 1 e

$\frac{4}{4}$ 1 Cym. Snare

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

BASIC EIGHTH NOTE CYMBAL BEAT IN $4\frac{1}{2}$ TIME INCLUDING SNARE & BASS PATTERNS

Count: 1 + 2 + d 3 + 4 + d 1 e

The page contains eight numbered musical staves, each representing a variation of a cymbal beat in $4\frac{1}{2}$ time. The notation includes cymbal patterns (marked with 'x'), snare patterns (marked with 'd'), and bass patterns (marked with 'e'). The first staff is labeled with a $4\frac{1}{2}$ time signature. A legend on the right side of the first staff identifies the symbols: 'Cym.' for cymbal, 'Snare' for snare, and 'Bass' for bass. The count '1 + 2 + d 3 + 4 + d 1 e' is positioned above the first staff. Each staff shows a sequence of notes and rests, with some notes marked with an accent (>) and some rests marked with an 'x'. The eighth staff includes triplets, indicated by a '3' below the notes.

Cym.
Snare
Bass

SIXTEENTH NOTE CYMBAL BEATS IN $\frac{4}{4}$ TIME WITH SNARE & BASS PATTERNS

Count: 1 e + d 2 e + d 3 e - d 4 e + d 1 e

1

$\frac{4}{4}$ Cym.
Snare
Bass

2

3

4

5

6

7

8